

GOSSIP, TRUTH AND FICTION.

THE classical bartender held up to the light a small glass of amber fluid, and remarked: "That, gentlemen, is whiskey 2,300 years old."

"Where did you get it?" asked THE HARBOR LIGHT representative with the true desire for facts.

"Why, that can't be true—somebody's been fooling you," said a young lawyer of Irish extraction. "There can't be whiskey 2,300 years old. Multigan, in his comprehensive history of 'Spiritous and Vinous Drinks of All Ages of Man,' gives King Uquebaugh, of Ireland, the first maker of what is now called whiskey, and his majesty died in 913. There must be some mistake."

"I guess not," said the bartender, "because I have proof verbal, ocular and documentary as to the age of this whiskey."

"I'd like to see it," insisted the sceptical disciple of Blackstone.

"Well, this whiskey was 'aged' by the new electric process that gives new made high-wines any age you like. The professor who pressed the button told me he just 'soaked her' up to 2,300 years to see what kind of stuff old Macenas' famous Falernian would be like if he could taste some of it to-day. I am going to have some of it cooked up to 4,600 years old, so that we may know the kind of tod old Rameses drank when he got a sphinx jag on. What ho! Garcon! Another bottle of that Club Imperiale."

A MAN who is well known to the literary and journalistic world, especially in England, a man who has seen the world, and knows it from St. Petersburg to Cape Town, is Phil Robinson, war correspondent of the London press, story and sketch writer of England, censor of the vernacular Indian press, and associate editor of the London Times. Mr. Robinson is now in this country as special correspondent of that paper, to investigate the Canadian question. During the Afghan war he was correspondent for London papers, and acted in a like capacity during the campaigns in Egypt and the Sudan. He travelled over this continent ten years ago, lecturing on "The Experiences of a War Correspondent in Four Countries." After that trip he wrote a notable series of letters for the London Times on the Mormon, entitled "Saints and Sinners." While in India Mr. Robinson obtained material for several volumes of essays and sketches, among which are "In My Indian Garden," "Under the Punkh" and "The Poet's Beasts and the Poet's Birds." All his Indian sketches and essays were afterwards issued under the name of "The Indian Garden Series." Mr. Robinson is a most entertaining conversationalist, as one equipped with such a fund of experience and observation in all parts of the world might be expected to be.

SOME time ago, a Provincial paper, evidently in good faith, published a communication, with a fictitious name attached,

which placed a young lady of the city in a rather unpleasant position. Several persons were suspected of being the author of the article, but the guilty one could not be discovered. One day a lady friend of the victim of the cruel communication entered a dry goods store in the city in which the paper is published, and in the course of a conversation remarked to one of the clerks, that Miss B— felt very much annoyed by the publication of the scurrilous article.

"I sincerely trust," said the clerk, "that Miss B— does not accuse me of being the author of the communication."

"Suspect you!" shrieked the lady friend at the top of her voice, "suspect you; no, a thousand times no, I assure you. Although the production was extremely idiotic, even your great-st enemy would not accuse you of having brains enough to write it."

THOMAS SEWARD, of Lytton, B. C., claims, and his right appears well founded, to be one of the discoverers of the famous Cariboo gold district. For the last 31 years Mr. Seward has tickled and tumbled the soil in the immediate neighborhood of Lytton, and the land has thrown him back a comfortable living in requital for his unfailling caresses. Flocks feed in his meadows, and herds hide in the luxuriance of his pastures. But as to his claim of being one of the original discoverers of Cariboo, here in effect is his proof, as furnished the New Westminster Columbian the other day. He came to British Columbia from the gold fields of California, his destination being Big Bar, which was then reported to be fabulously rich diggings. With a number of other miners, he formed a partnership, and left Victoria in June, 1858, in a canoe, loaded with sufficient provisions for a long stay in the undiscovered country. They passed up the Fraser to Yale, through the great canyons, and on to the Lilloet, taking the canoe all the way to the head of navigation on the latter river. Here it was necessary to pack the provisions forty miles to Big Bar. The party prospected Big Bar thoroughly, making bare pay. The men were greatly discouraged, and broke up the party and returned to Victoria. Mr. Seward and a man named J. S. Cunningham still had confidence in the country. They formed a partnership, and struck pay dirt, which returned from \$6 to \$10 per day to each. While they were working one day, a canoe passed up stream with three men in charge. One was drawing a canoe by a rope attached to it; the second was fending it off the rocks, and the third was steering. They passed on the opposite side of the stream to which Mr. Seward and his partner were, and did not stop. These three men were the original discoverers of Cariboo, but who they were, where they came from, and what was their fate, has never been ascertained. Mr. Seward afterwards learned that these men went to Fort Alexander. While there, an Indian came in and reported that gold was to be found in quantity in the river now known as the Quesnelle. They proceeded up the forks of Quesnelle, left their canoe and

penetrated the Cariboo country. Since then no trace of them has ever been found. They may have been killed by the Indians, or starved to death. The theory that these men never returned to civilization, and must have met with an untimely death is well sustained by the fact that none of them has ever ever turned up to lay claim to the honor of discovering the country out of which nearly \$60,000,000 in gold dust and nuggets have been taken. A few days after these men passed up the river, Mr. Seward left the diggings and returned to Victoria; but within six weeks time word reached this city of a great strike of gold in the upper country. In the spring of 1859, Mr. Seward again started up the country, and was the first white man to visit what is now known as Grouse Creek. He, with Messrs. Kiechly and Harvey, may be called the discoverers of Cariboo, though the honor properly belongs to the men who never returned.

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